



Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

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Testimony in Support of HB 6354 An Act Establishing a Green Jobs Corps Program

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Haddad, Vice Chairs Sen. Maher and Rep. Rochelle, Ranking Members Sen. Kelly and Rep. Haines, and Distinguished Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

From: Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

On behalf of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting HB 6354, An Act Establishing a Green Jobs Corps Program. The Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs builds alliances among diverse constituencies to combat climate change, create jobs and promote racial, economic, and climate justice. The Roundtable seeks to build a worker-oriented environmental movement committed to securing a fair and just transition that protects both the environment and the livelihoods of workers and their communities.

The clean technology sector is growing rapidly in Connecticut as we strive to meet our state's clean energy and greenhouse gas mitigation goals. The transition to a cleaner economy built on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and beneficial electrification will not only benefit the climate and environment, but will also improve public health, reduce energy costs, and improve energy independence. Unfortunately, the training of workers has struggled to keep pace with the demand for labor in many of these industries. To keep these rapidly growing industries in our state, we must ensure an adequate supply of qualified labor.

HB 6354 addresses this issue directly by planning for the workforce development needs for green jobs in our state. The bill would accelerate the training of Connecticut residents for green jobs to a pace necessary to meet our greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. Without such a plan, we are likely to fall short of our targets because there simply won't be enough qualified workers to implement projects that reduce emissions. Further, a shortage of qualified workers will make it difficult for Connecticut to attract and retain clean energy companies. Green jobs are the future and we should ensure our residents, especially our students and young people, are prepared to fill those jobs.

To promote equity in green job training programs, we suggest that workforce development planning and investments identify barriers to training and employment and address those barriers through wraparound services provided directly through training programs or in partnership with social services organizations. Such barriers may include but are not limited to access to transportation, access to appropriate clothing, childcare arrangements, a criminal record, or limited English proficiency. Further, training programs should recruit from populations that are underrepresented in the relevant area of employment. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill. We urge you to vote in favor.

Sincerely,

Aziz Dehkan, Executive Director
Allison Pilcher, Policy Director
Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

www.ctclimateandjobs.org